HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIII.

A MORNING WITH THE POPE.

By W. H. W. Campbell.

EVERY day, at six o'clock in the morning, the chief *valet de chambre* enters the bedroom of Leo XIII to receive his orders. The walls of this rather narrow chamber are hung with yellow stuffs, and the room is divided into two by a portière concealed by which is a bed draped with white and a prayer chair. While the Pope is dressing, the altar in the private chapel of the apartment is put in order. Then, with only the assistance of his personal attendant, he says the mass.

Occasionally the Pope leaves his private chapel for the oratory which opens upon the hall of the guards. This is a modest little chapel, simple and contemplative. Over the altar is an admirable Nativity, painted by Romanelli, which is lighted up by six massive candles. A select few of the faithful, members of the Roman aristocracy, or strangers of distinction, are permitted to attend this service. It is very brief, a mere half hour in duration ; no discourse, no presentations ; but it affords almost the only opportunity of approaching the Pope closely. Hence the privil-

Digitized by Google

THE VATICAN.

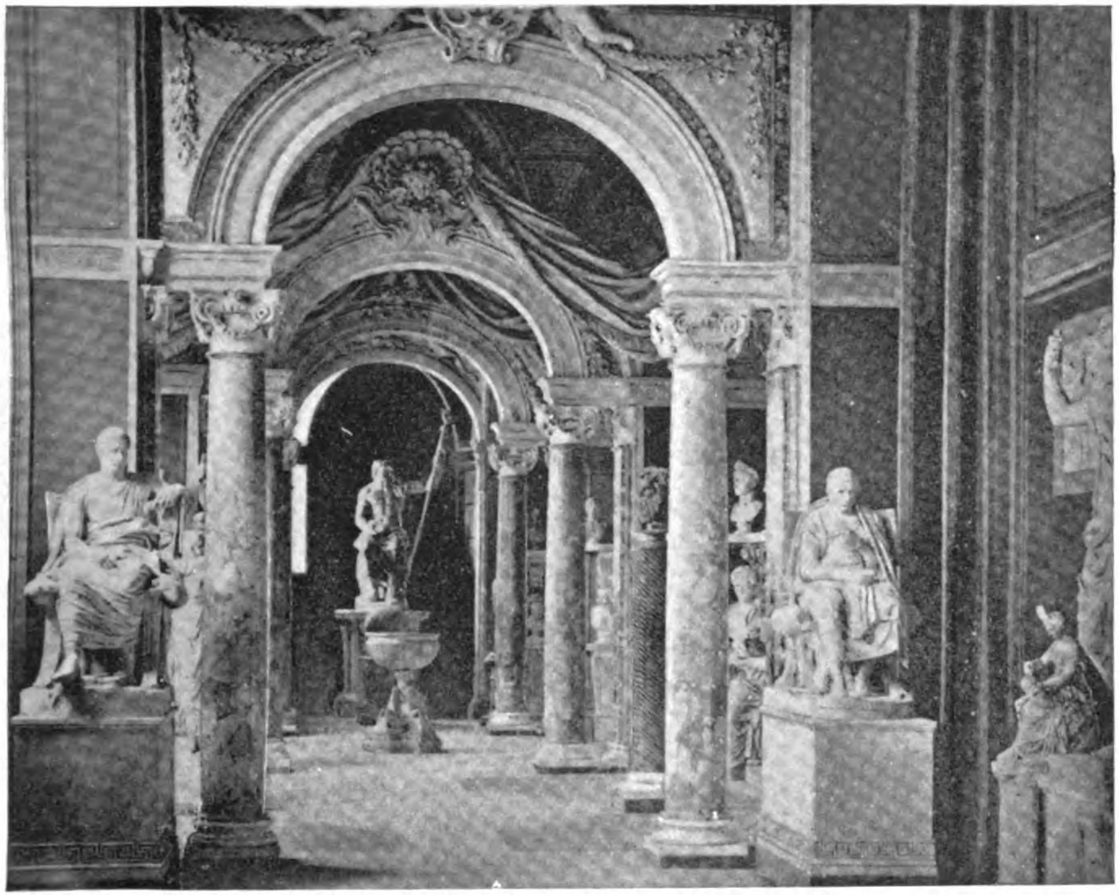
ege of attendance at the chapel is highly prized.

In repeating the mass the Pope pronounces the sacred words very distinctly, but with occasional accentuations that betray fatigue in his respiration. He ascends and descends the altar steps with difficulty, sustained by two acolytes, but as the service reaches its solemn climax the celebrant straightens up, his eyes gleam, and his features become animated. His faith seems to lift him up.

Except at this private mass, it is almost impossible to approach the Pope, for he does not grant audiences except for some precise object: something of immediate utility; not to those who demand information, or are prompted merely by curiosity or devotion. It is part of the function of the Master of the Chamber to keep pilgrims aloof, and to parry indiscreet demands. When visitors come with too high recommendations to be rebuffed, they are invited to be present at the private mass, but further than that nothing is promised. Time is needed, a great deal of time; for the day's procedure depends greatly upon the "disposition"—it is not etiquette to mention "health"—of the Holy Father. Sometimes, indeed, on a prescribed day, the pilgrims arrive at a very early hour only to find a cardinal delegated to say mass in the oratory. Then all that remains for the unlucky pilgrims is to kiss the *faildistorio*, a sort of prayer chair used by the cardinals who assist at the private mass.

THE VATICAN—THE SCALA REGIA, BUILT BY POPE PAUL III.

Digitized by Google



THE VATICAN—GALLERY OF STATUES.

Immediately after the mass said by himself, which is followed by a charity mass recited by a chaplain, the Pope takes his first repast. This consists of bread and coffee with milk. While breakfasting, he reads the journals, opens urgent dispatches, and receives his private secretaries. The meal concluded, he goes to work at once.

His method of work when an encyclical or an important diplomatic paper is to be prepared shows most careful reflection and attention. After having read what of greatest weight has been written on the subject to be treated, he begins by scratching brief notes upon large sheets of official paper—very condensed, for he writes with difficulty and is compelled to make use of a little apparatus to sustain his hand. These notes serve as the outline sketch, jotted down phrase by phrase, idea by idea, on the carefully numbered pages. These are locked up in a drawer, the key of which is never trusted out of his hands. This is true also of the keys of his private apartments, and is a matter of precaution against the curiosity and the greed of indiscreet valets. Under Pius IX there was a scandalous traffic in this sort of memorabilia.

When the Pope judges the time ripe for the completion of his dccument, he summons one of his secretaries in whom he has special confidence, such as Monsignor Angeli, who bears the title of "secret chaplain," or Monsignor della Volpinè, who is the official secretary of Latin letters. To him is dictated the prepared outline.

It is the duty of the secretary, in this first Italian version, simply to smoothe out the phrases while preserving the chosen expressions of his master. Subsequently there is a fresh revision by the Pope, a new overhauling by the secretary, and so on *ad infinitum*, till the document is satisfactorily decked out in its Italian garb. Then the work is be-

Digitized by Google

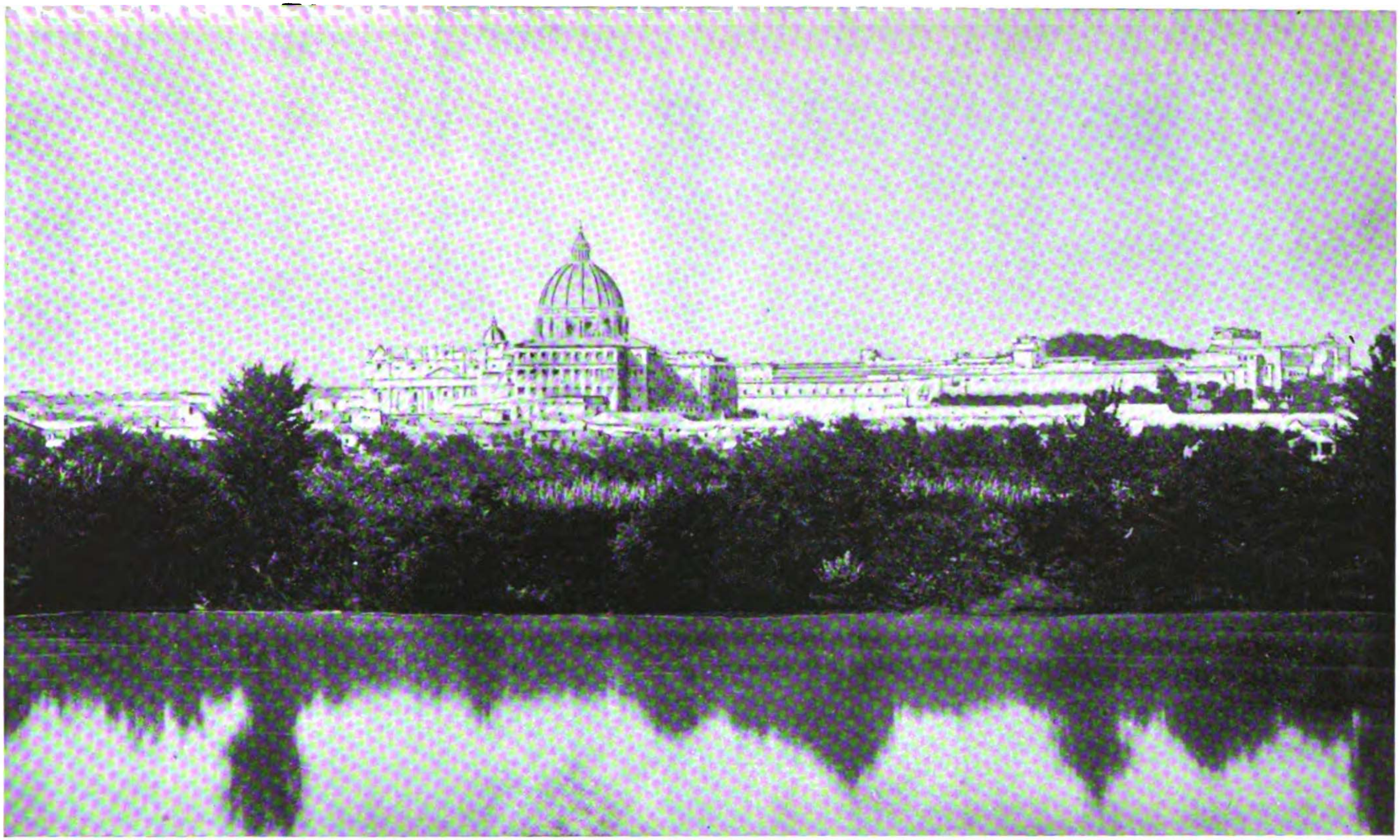
THE VATICAN—CHIARAMONTI MUSEUM.

gun over again in Latin. It is not merely a translation, for Leo XIII prides himself on his ability to write pure Latin. Not only are the ideas to be preserved in the new version, but infinite patience is bestowed upon the turn of the phrases, that the result may be, if not Ciceronian, at least classic Latin worthy of a learned scholar. When this is gone over and over to the complete satisfaction of His Holiness, it is locked up in his private drawer, there to attend in eternal patience the possibility of its being wanted.

All this literary labor is carried on in the library, a vast hall of which half is concealed by a great portière. On every side are shelves of books and superb pictures. Behind the curtain is a perpetual chorus of canary birds. Pope Leo loves these little creatures, interests himself in and helps care for them, while their constant chirping amuses and does not distract him.

At a quarter after ten the audiences begin. For these the Pope passes into a smaller apartment hung with red damask, and, red upon red, with pontifical ensigns. This silk damask, apparently of Lyons fabrication, is to be found in all the official apartments of the Vatican; it dates back to the time of Gregory XVI. There are no pictures, and scarcely any furniture, except the arm chair in which the Pope is seated, and, upon a table loaded with documents, several portable clocks of ancient style. Hardly ever—ordinary and extraordinary audiences included—are more than eight or ten persons admitted each day to see the Pope in his private apartments. Nothing of what is said in these transpires. The Cardinals find out very quickly that the Pope does not tolerate indiscretions in talk. The diplomats have too much to lose to furnish their several courts with unauthorized news; and the hungry journalists only publish what they are desired to reveal. To the un-

Digitized by Google



THE VATICAN AND ST. PETER'S, FROM THE TIBER.

Digitized by Google

THE VATICAN—LOGGIA OF RAFFAELLE.

initiated the discourses of the Pope must seem dull and tame, so conservative is he in his expressions. He prefers, when anything is to be said of importance, suddenly to launch upon the world one of the carefully studied documents from his private drawer. Therefore his conversation is often found to be disconnected and apparently meaningless. Perhaps one exception may be made. In respect to art, painting, and literature, the Pope talks freely. Once a year, on his birthday, the members of the pontifical court are received in the library, and the utmost freedom is then permitted, even to the extent of contradiction of the Pope's theories of art, which are often paradoxical in appearance. This, however, is done for once, and is never repeated.

As soon as the last caller has gone in to the Pope, there begins to be a stir in the antechambers. The body guard prepares for the morning promenade. The valet in chief moves about everywhere, seeing to it that all is in readiness. The hat, the great red mantle, and the cane of Leo XIII are arranged upon the bench at the door of the secret antechamber. The guards form ranks, and at the bottom of the apartment of the Palatine guards the great door swings open and the portable chair is brought in by bearers in red uniform. A bell sounds, Monsignor della Volpinè hastens to the secret door, whence the last visitor has just emerged. He enters; he comes out again; a moment of silence, and again the door swings back, and the Pope appears, giving his benediction to the kneeling attendants of the first antechamber. "Be it well with you!" he almost always says, with the air of a man who is satisfied with his morning's work. "The day is fair: is it not so? We are going for a bit

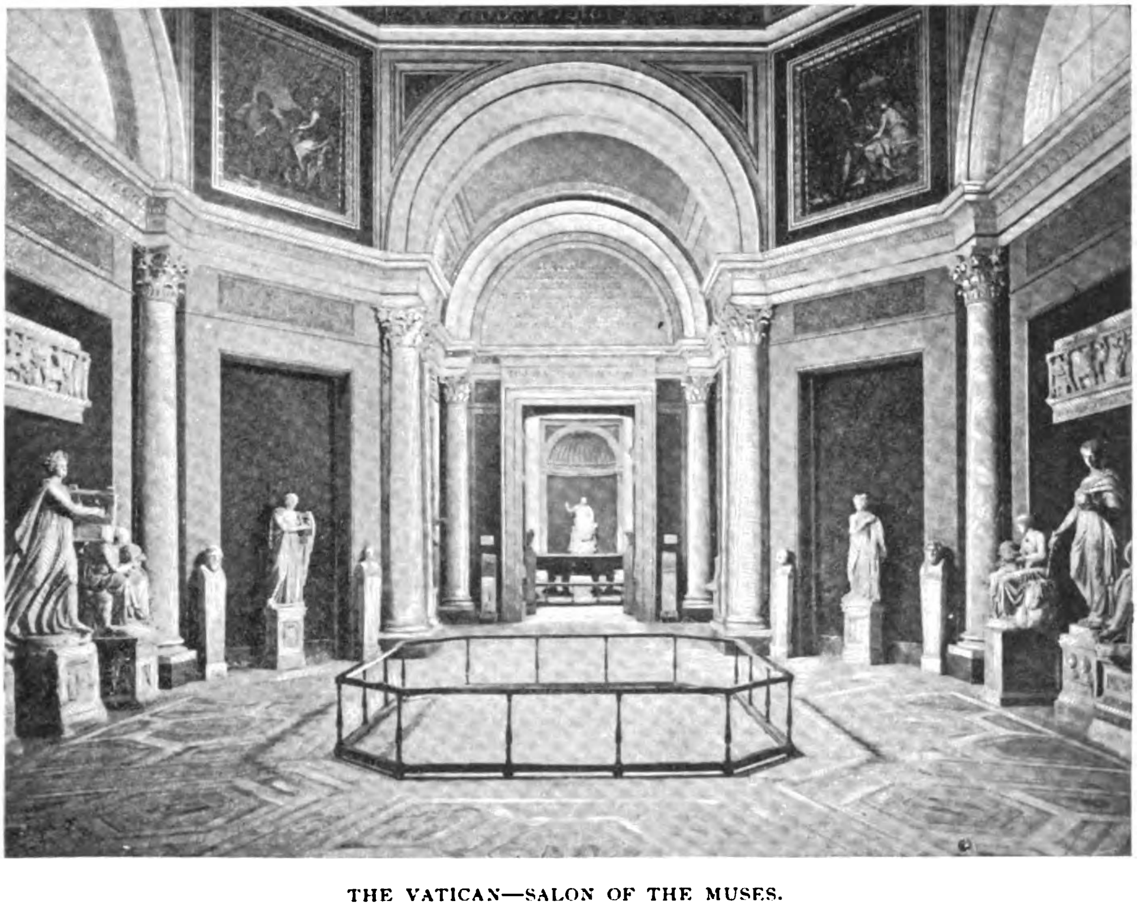
Digitized by Google

of air." The person addressed makes his best bow. In the other antechamber may be heard commands given in low tones.

Scattering his benedictions as he moves along, the Pope advances to his portable chair, seats himself therein and gives his final blessing to the servitors. "Forward," cries the chief of the grooms, and the little procession sets itself in motion. At the head of the column go two Swiss with halberts on shoulder; two "gardes nobiles" follow, and then the chair borne by six grooms. Other gardes nobiles follow after, and another pair of Swiss bring up the rear. The corridors are traversed at a rather rapid pace, and the procession descends the grand stairway from the museum to the garden.

At the garden gate the Pope enters his carriage with one attendant. Two horsemen parade with the carriage as escort, the others remaining at the gateway. The Vatican gardens are so extensive that a carriage moving at a trot takes twenty minutes to make the circuit around them. At the hour of the Holy Father's promenade they assume the air of a state of siege. On every hand the gendarmes are drawn up with revolver in belt, watching the high walls, which on several occasions have been exposed to attempts at scaling. The carriage drive occupies an hour. Nearly always the vehicle may be found at the same spot on the same stroke of the bell as on the day previous, or the day before that. The Pope, you know, or rather he knows, is a prisoner, and the gardens are not all the world. He might go outside, to be sure, if he wished, but what are "motives of state" good for? Whether the drive is monotonous or not, it makes little difference to Leo XIII, for he is absorbed in his breviary all the time, while his attendant shelters him from the sun with a parasol.

He does, however, halt to talk with the gardener, for he is fond of flowers. He chats with this func-



THE VATICAN—SALON OF THE MUSES.

Digitized by Google

tionary in quite a familiar way, about the rose bushes, the orchids, the tube roses, the damages by frost or sun. And next he has a word for the fruits, the favorite vine, the rare olives, and a few pet apple trees. Then, how does the bird lime work with some fruit eating feathered sinners? To enjoy this solitary diversion the Pope has dismounted. But the promenade hour soon slips away; His Holiness remounts his carriage. The garden gate closes upon him, and the "Prisoner of the Vatican" is soon absorbed again in his studies and his prayers.

THE DAWN OF LOVE.

I HAD been sleeping—dreaming: I awoke!
  E'en as the sun's gay heralds put to flight
  With golden spears the misty ghosts of night,
And from the shrouding gloom, with every stroke
Of magic wands, a thousand charms evoke,
  For me a growing splendor seemed to light
  To view a world in unguessed beauty dight.
It seemed a new and glorious morn had broke;
The vale appeared a rose embower'd shrine,
  Each flower, a swaying censer. To my knee
I sank and worshiped, as before mine eyne
  A veil was swept away and I could see
A newer truth in nature—the Divine—
  I was in love! In love, dear heart, with thee.

Judson Newman Smith.

Digitized by Google